

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

Executive Registry

11 MAY 1976

DD/S&T# 2124-741

Professor William W. Van Alstyne  
American Association of University Professors  
One Dupont Circle - Suite 500  
Washington, D. C. 20036

Dear Professor Van Alstyne:

I received your letter of May 4, 1976, concerning CIA relations with the academic community on the same day that you released it to the press and gave a press interview about it. The fact that you did not await a response from me before making your letter public is somewhat troubling. Unfortunately, your doing this could suggest to others that your purpose is something other than the resolution of the problem you perceive.

Having said that, I firmly reject your allegations that CIA corrupts American "colleges and universities by making political fronts of them," that they "are made conduits of deceit" and that "faculty members are paid to lie." These charges reflect your ignorance of the true nature of the relationships we now have with American educational institutions and their faculties. To issue a statement that I am taking "steps to end the exploitation of the academic community," as you request, would give credibility to the series of erroneous assumptions and allegations in your letter. Whatever you have heard about the past, I can assure you that there is now no reason for the members of your association to fear any threat to their integrity or their high sense of purpose from CIA.

The Agency has several kinds of relationships with scholars and scholarly institutions. They include negotiated contracts for scientific research and development, contracts for social science research on the many matters that affect foreign policy, paid and unpaid consultations between scholars and CIA research analysts, contacts with individuals who have travelled abroad, and other similar contacts that help us fulfill our primary responsibility; i.e., to provide the policy makers of our government with information and assessments of foreign developments.



We seek the voluntary and witting cooperation of individuals who can help the foreign policy processes of the United States. Those who help are expressing a freedom of choice. Occasionally such relationships are confidential at our request, but more often they are discreet at the scholar's request because of his concern that he will be badgered by those who feel he should not be free to make this particular choice.

None of the relationships are intended to influence either what is taught or any other aspect of a scholar's work. We specifically do not try to inhibit the "free search for truth and its free exposition." Indeed, we would be foolish to do so, for it is the truth we seek. We know that we have no monopoly on fact or on understanding, and to restrict the search for the truth would be extremely detrimental to our own purposes. If CIA were to isolate itself from the good counsel of the best scholars in our country, we would surely become a narrow organization that could give only inferior service to the government. The complexity of international relations today requires that our research be strong, and we intend to keep it strong by seeking the best perspectives from inside and outside the government.

Your letter indicates a serious lack of confidence in people in your own profession--a view that I do not share; that is, your belief that your academic colleagues, including members of your association, would accept pay "to lie about the sources of their support, to mislead others, to induce betrayed confidences, to misstate the true objects of their interest, and to misrepresent the actual objectives of their work." It is precisely that kind of irresponsible charge that tends to drive responsible relationships away from openness and toward the secretiveness that you seem to abhor.

Finally, Professor Van Alstyne, the seriousness of your charges demands that we find a way toward better understanding. Because we owe that to both our organizations, I invite you to meet with a few senior officials of this Agency for that purpose.

Sincerely,

/s/ George Bush

George Bush  
Director

ONE DUPONT CIRCLE, SUITE 500  
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Telephone 202-466-8039

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President

WILLIAM W. VAN ALSTYNE  
Duke University

General Secretary

JOSEPH DUFFEY  
Washington Office

May 4, 1976

Mr. George Bush  
Director  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Bush:

The recent report of the Senate Select Committee on Foreign and Military Intelligence has confirmed what was already published elsewhere: that the CIA has for years covertly used academic institutions and employed academic persons in ways which compromise institutional and professional integrity. Universities and scholars have been paid to lie about the sources of their support, to mislead others, to induce betrayed confidences, to misstate the true objects of their interest, and to misrepresent the actual objectives of their work.

In ending the practice of CIA employment of missionaries and journalists for covert operations, you have demonstrated your concern for and your willingness to protect the integrity and independence of those institutions. As national President of the American Association of University Professors, I call upon you now to provide the same guarantees against misuse and subversion for our colleges and universities so that they may be freed of the stigma of covert, and often unknowing, participation in manipulative government operations conducted by the CIA.

The American Association of University Professors espouses the professional freedom of teachers and scholars not as some peculiar entitlement of their own but as a duty that they owe to their students and to the community as a whole. For this reason, the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, issued jointly by the AAUP and the Association of American Colleges and endorsed by approximately a hundred learned and professional associations, provides:

"Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition.

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A government which corrupts its colleges and universities by making political fronts of them has betrayed academic freedom and compromised all who teach. When colleges and universities are made conduits of deceit and when faculty members are paid to lie, there is an end to the common good of higher education.

On behalf of the American Association of University Professors, I write to express my dismay and utter repugnance at the disregard for the integrity of institutions of higher education shown by the CIA. The practice of shamelessly exploiting the reputation of American academics for trustworthiness, which has characterized CIA activity in the past, evidently continues today. I see no reason whatsoever why higher education should not be treated with the same regard previously shown in your action ending the covert use of missionaries and journalists by the CIA. I ask you to take steps to end the exploitation of the academic community and to disengage the Agency from covert activities which induce academics to betray their professional trust.

The American academic community awaits the necessary forthright CIA guarantees that its integrity will not be further compromised.

Sincerely,

*William Van Alstyne*

William W. Van Alstyne

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